1:Heckewelder M-5 (ca. 1800)1819
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men, who every where speak more than the men, never want words to express themselves, but rather seem to have too many, and they do not oftener employ gestures in aid of their conversation than the vivacity of their sex induces them to do every where else.

It is true that the Indians have a language of signs, by which they communicate with each other on occasions when speaking is not prudent or proper, as, for instance, when they are about to meet an enemy, and by speaking they would run the risk of being discovered. By this means they also make themselves understood to those nations of Indians whose languages they are not acquainted with, for all the Indian nations understand each other in this way. It is also, in many cases, a saving of words which the Indians are much intent on, believing that too much talking disgraces a man. When, therefore, they will relate something extraordinary in a few words, they make use of corresponding signs, which is very entertaining to those who listen and attend to them, and who are acquainted both with the language and the signs, being very much as if somebody were to explain a picture set before them. But they never make use of signs to supply any deficiency of language, as they have words and phrases sufficient to express every thing.

I have frequently questioned Indians who had been educated at our schools, and could understand, read, write, and speak both English and German, whether they could express their ideas better in either of those languages than in their own, and they have always and uniformly answered that they could express themselves with far the greatest ease in their own Indian, and that they never were at a loss for words or phrases in which to clothe every idea that occurred to them, without being in any case obliged to gesticulate or make motions with their hands or otherwise. From the knowledge which I have acquired of their language, I have

3:Zeisberger M-5 (1767-1780)1910
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orgy, put him out of the way, pretending to be very drunk and not capable of judging of the nature of his deed. Under such circumstances, according to ancient usage, the murderer must pay a hundred fathoms of wampum for the murder of a man and two hundred for that of a woman. If he is too poor to raise the amount, which is commonly the case, his friends help to raise it and turn it over to the relatives of the slain, at the same time delivering a speech. If any one has murdered his own relative, he usually escapes without difficulty, for the family can easily find reason for the deed, not wishing to lose two of their friends at once. Should a murderer not feel himself safe, he goes to another region or town where he is a stranger.

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In case of theft, which is held as a disgrace among them, nothing further is required than that the thief must restore what he has stolen, pay for it or give something in exchange. If justice cannot be satisfied in one of these ways, because the thief has nothing, loss falls on the party robbed, or the friends of the thief, if such he has, must make good the loss.

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When a whole party goes out to hunt, they govern themselves according to the wishes of the oldest or the most expert, particularly if he be a member of the council. It is not considered good form for one to leave the party before the end of the hunt. If one has wounded a deer and another followed and killed it, the skin belongs to the first and either the half or the whole of the meat to the latter. If several take aim at once and they cannot determine which of them made the best shot, the skin is given to the oldest of the party, or, if he happened to be one of those taking aim, he is said to have killed the animal. Old men, therefore, no longer able to shoot well, generally get their share of the skins, if they only aim now and then with the others though they do not hit the mark.

Such old men, accompanying a hunting party, get both meat and skins, for the good hunters will not let them return empty-handed. They have, in general, and the Unami in particular, the custom that when a huntsman has shot a deer, and another Indian joins him or only looks on at a distance, he immediately gives him the whole animal and goes in pursuit of another.